

Kara Backer

Kara Backer graduated from the University of Mary and the CHI St. Alexius Health Respiratory Therapy Program and spent 15 years as a bedside respiratory therapist. For the past eleven years, Ms. Backer has been the Nicotine Dependence Treatment Coordinator in the Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) at North Dakota Health and Human Services. Ms. Backer coordinates a state-funded NDQuits Cessation (NDQC) Grant Program, supporting the implementation and expansion of tobacco and nicotine dependence treatment in health systems and various organizations to improve the health of North Dakotans.

In her role, she assists health systems in enhancing clinician documentation to streamline nicotine dependence treatment interventions and extract treatment data to track outcomes for the health system and the TPCP. In 2018, she began organizing in-state tobacco treatment specialist (TTS) trainings to increase local treatment resources. Since then, nearly 500 TTS have been trained in North Dakota. To keep TTS engaged and maintain current knowledge, the NDQC Grant supports ongoing education. Ms. Backer provides technical assistance and support for NDQC grantees' in-state Nicotine Dependence Conferences and other TPCP-funded trainings.